

Earth Day began in April of 1970 as a National demonstration of environmental reform. Nearly four decades later, Earth Day has become a global movement that honors our planet by encouraging the public to take an active role in protecting our earth and its natural resources. Each year EPA celebrates Earth Day with widespread outreach efforts and public events.

Did you know that the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage during their lifetime? We overlook some routines in our daily life that can potentially lead to careless waste production and natural resource consumption.

Here are a few tips to help the environment this Earth Day:

ENERGY CONSERVATION:

Buy or switch to energy efficient lighting fixtures and bulbs. Look for the EnergyStar label on products that pollute less and can help you save money on energy bills.

Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit; you will cut your water-heating costs by 6-10 percent.

Leave your car at home twice a week and take public transportation instead; you will cut greenhouse gas emissions by 1,500 pounds per year.

Install a water-efficient shower head (2.5 gallons or less per minute), it reduces water consumption and energy necessary to heat the water; it pays for itself in only four months.

WATER CONSERVATION:

Take shorter showers instead of baths which require about 70 gallons of water, while taking a five-minute shower only uses 10 to 25 gallons.

Wash your car less often or wash it at a car wash where they clean and recycle the water. If you're going to wash your car at home, use a bucket of soapy water instead of running the hose. Keep a spring-loaded nozzle on the hose.

Water your lawn in the evening or very early morning to minimize evaporation.

Use a broom or rake instead of a hose to clean off your driveway or sidewalk.

For more water saving tips visit: <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/tips/index.htm>

RECYCLING :

Whenever possible use recycle paper; one ton of recycled paper uses: 64% less energy, 50% less water, 74% less air pollution, saves 17 trees and creates 5 times more jobs than one ton of paper products from virgin wood pulp.

If your community has a recycling program, reorganize your kitchen to accommodate paper and glass/metal recycling bins aside from the trash bin. When at a picnic or a similar outing, bring a recycling bag with you.

When shopping and asked whether you want paper or plastic bags, select the type you are more likely to reuse for other purposes, such as trash can liners or future shopping.

The government plays an important role in protecting our environment, but so do you. Each and every one of us has a role to play in protecting the planet for future generations. Let this year's Earth Day again remind us to do our part and treat the environment with respect.

For more detailed tips on how you can make a difference at your home, school, workplace, and every where else, please visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/earthday/>